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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Father in Heaven, holy is Your Name. You brought light from darkness and order from chaos. You can bring order to our Nation and world. Thank You for the gift of this day and for our borrowed heartbeats. Thank You also for the privilege to serve You by serving our great country.

Use our lawmakers to do Your will. May they become Your merciful hands to reduce the pain and pathology in our world. Lord, use their daily experiences of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, victory and defeat for Your glory. Protect them with the shield of Your love as You fill their hearts with Your peace.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 4, 2015.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PAUL thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 625

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for its second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 625) to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

KEYSTONE BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, construction of the Keystone Pipeline would pump billions into our economy, it would support thousands of jobs, and a bipartisan majority in both the House and Senate voted to support it.

Today the Senate will vote to support American jobs and infrastructure one more time. It should be a no-brainer. For a long time, projects like Keystone basically were no-brainers. They were often approved without much controversy at all. But that was

before powerful special interests and ideological extremists decided to embark on a quixotic crusade.

The implication that building Keystone would result in some sort of apocalyptic cataclysm has always flown in the face of science. Even the assertion that Keystone would have significant impact on global climate ignores the scientific findings of President Obama's own State Department; it said the environmental impact would be minimal.

The reality is that the energy resources in question are almost certainly going to come out of the ground whether or not Keystone is built. The real question here is whether we are going to allow Keystone's energy to help support middle-class jobs in America or whether we will allow those jobs and energy to potentially be sent to high-polluting countries such as China. Deep-pocketed leftists and extremists appear to prefer the latter option.

By vetoing the bipartisan Keystone jobs bill, President Obama sided with those moneyed special interests over the middle class, and it is still unclear why. It can't be about protecting the climate because vetoing the bipartisan bill would hardly have an effect. It can't be about protecting a broken review process the President himself broke long ago because this bipartisan bill seeks to fix the review process. And it can't be about giving the President more time because he has delayed this decision for years on end. Here is the only serious explanation I can think of: President Obama is signaling to extreme special interests that his party is turning away from workers and toward them.

We have seen how the President's veto has outraged some in the labor union community. I know it makes some of our Democratic colleagues pretty uncomfortable as well. I suspect that includes Democrats who didn't support the Senate's initial passage of Keystone. I suspect it also includes

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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